Upgradation of airports

7701. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of States have represented for upgradation of airports in their respective States;

(b) if so, the names of airports recommended for upgradation; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Surat in Gujarat, Kargil in Jammu & Kashmir, Shimla, Kullu, Gaggal in Himachal Pradesh, Nanded in Maharashtra, Goa, Jabalpur in Madnya Pradesh and Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh.

(c) Surat and Nanded belong to the State Governments. Airports Authority of India (AAI) has no plans to upgrade these airports. AAI has plans to upgrade other airports. However, upgradation work is taken up in a phased manner depending upon the availability of resources.

Air pollution due to increase in air flights

7702. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to sttae:

(a) whether it is fact that as per the estimates of the economic cell, the number of international flights operating from airports of the country is likely to go up from 7,36,000 in 1994-95 to 9,32,000 in 1999-2000 and domestic flights from 17,74 ,000 to 23,68,000 during the period.

(b) whether it is also a fact that the increase in air flights is likely to lead to air pollution discharge of noxious gases, saturation of air space and congestion at airports of the country; and

(c) if so, steps contemplated to meet the situation arising out of the increase in air flights?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) The estimated figures relating to international and domestic flights are indicated below:—

	1994-95	1999-2000
International flights	70173	93200
Domestic flights .	139417	143600

(b) and (c) Environmental pollution due to aircraft operations is not likely to reach alarming proportions. With the increase in air traffic, congestion at some airports is likely to increase. Airports Authority of India has drawn up plans for the upgradation of the airports and the infrastructural facilities in order to meet the long term|short term requirements.

Upgradation of Guwahati airport into International Airport

7703. SHRI BHADRESWAR GOHAIN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that since a long time the people of Assam and the North East were demanding the upgradation of the Guwahati Airport into an International Airport;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when it is likely to be announced?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Airports Authority of India is developing Guwahati airport as a Model Airport with provision for customs and immigration facilities for limited international operations as and when required.